

## **SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK DESIGN REVIEW PANEL**

Date of meeting:	16/07/2019
Site:	Soldiers Field House, Findon
Proposal:	Demolition of existing dwellings and construction of 12 affordable dwellings with associated works including public open space, access, parking and landscaping
Planning reference:	SDNP/19/01876/FUL
Panel members sitting:	Mark Penfold (Chair) Lap Chan Richard Eastham Robyn Butcher Andy Clemas
SDNPA officers in attendance:	Benjamin Terry (Design Officer) Ruth Childs (Landscape officer) Mike Hughes (Project and performance manger) Stella New (Planning Officer) Natacha Bricks-Yonow (Support Services Officer)
SDNPA Planning Committee in attendance:	None
Item presented by:	Neil Armitage (Architects) Anna Gillings (Planning consultant)
Declarations of interest:	None

The Panel's response to your scheme will be placed on the Planning Authority's website where it can be viewed by the public.

The SDNPA operate a transparent service, whereby pre-application and application details, although not actively publicised will be placed on the online planning register. This is unless the applicant gives reasons why the enquiry is commercially sensitive.

	<b>Main Issues</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Typology: The built form on the edge of Findon.</li> <li>• Topography</li> <li>• Car Parking</li> <li>• Materials</li> <li>• Existing Beech Hedgerow</li> <li>• External Storage</li> </ul>
	<b>Summary</b>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Panel feel the revised scheme is a huge improvement to the scheme presented to them in June: It is as the Design Review Panel had envisaged it should be.</li> <li>2. It is a very good response, in terms of edge of settlement typology.</li> <li>3. The scale of development, the roof forms, its integration within the landscape; the space in which the landscape comes into the site; and the farmyard type are all positive features of the revised scheme.</li> <li>4. The applicant has demonstrably considered all the issues that were raised at the last DRP meeting.</li> <li>5. The Panel feel the next steps should be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refine the parking strategy - to incorporate the farmstead typology into the public realm.</li> <li>• Refine the built-form of properties 6, 7 &amp; 8, to create a more succinct building arrangement in this context.</li> <li>• Consider integrating storage into the built-form.</li> <li>• Consider integrating the built form into the boundary wall, and to ensure varying height of the boundary wall.</li> <li>• Design in or design out access to the wider landscape – along the main ‘green finger’.</li> <li>• Consider the re-orientation of the unit immediately opposite the entrance to create a focal point</li> <li>• Consider giving the wall and gate a more rural character (ie low key, without fancy piers, with a timber field style gate)</li> <li>• Potential for informal pedestrian access along the eastern boundary and/or a more informal footway arrangement along the southern boundary (to the main vehicular access point).</li> <li>• Consider using a model to illustrate the relationship between built-form and topography</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
	<b>Notes</b>

**Discussion  
/  
Questions  
with  
applicants**

**6. The Panel asked the applicant to indicate where the existing hedge line is on a plan.**

The applicant indicated this on the location plan. They explained the principles for removing the Beech hedge and using the buffer planting area immediately outside the development boundary.

**7. The Panel asked if it would be used as a buffer, to screen the development? ...As it is uncharacteristic in this landscape – Would it be less dense, soft and more permeable?**

The applicant agreed and explained the principles for the landscape planting strategy.

**8. The Panel noted (looking at the photographs) in terms of the colour, many of the buildings on the edge of Findon are white, grey or a light neutral colour. They have an interesting intervention in the local and wider environment. Moving away from brick could work very well if the right material is used.**

The applicant stated that they would like to use a grey-multi brick; have used a grey similar brick for a scheme in Selbourne, which works well in terms of the local colour pattern.

**9. The Panel asked about the roof design and materials - will they use slate?**

Yes. Roofs will have a shallow pitch; this form can be found on most farm buildings in the locality.

**10. The Panel asked if there will be openings in the roof zone?**

The applicant answered that they have avoided using them to negate the risk of light pollution (Dark Night Skies). One of our main concerns in the roof zone area is the use of photovoltaic panels. We would like to integrate them into the roof forms, and ensure that there siting (orientation of buildings) responds to sensitive views into the site.

**11. The Panel asked about the layout and how the applicant can prevent parked vehicles dominating the scene on arrival.**

The applicant agreed that they need to do a lot of work here. The applicant believes they can improve parking by using informal parking arrangements, with contrasting surface material finishes (gravel).

**12. The Panel asked what surface materials will be used?**

The applicant answered: loose gravel. They are also considering a geogrid solution.

**13. The Panel asked if the Selborne scheme let the residents decide where to park?**

The applicant answered that it was a smaller scheme with only four dwellings; which were all market. In this scheme, there would be allocated spaces and visitors' spaces which would be associated with each dwelling. The farmstead typology would require more hardstanding and less incidental planting areas for flower beds. This is an approach will wish to explore.

**14. The Panel asked if the applicant had looked at options for extending the buildings outward to create a cover for cars in the middle of the buildings?**

The applicant stated that they will look at these options when they review the parking strategy.

**15. The Panel noted that the real challenge and where the quality of the scheme will be shown is at the point where the green finger going through the site and the place-making element in the central court (where most of the parking is arranged) is designed. It could create a real sense of place, with a specific character for this scheme. The parking arrangement is a real issue here and requires resolving.**

The applicant explained that with the farmyard typology, a lot can be done to break that regimented feel.

**16. The Panel asked if the roof on the property to the North-East corner continues across the alleyway?**

The applicant answered it was.

**17. The Panel asked why this was not done to the property to the South-East corner?**

Originally, they had a larger building there, but the scale of the building was considered too great in form and mass – “it could have an adverse impact when viewed from Cissbury ring”. We have rotated the building and reduced the mass of the block to respond to this.

**18. The Panel agrees but thinks it would work better if it was connected and stepped (down)...As an individual building, it is not wide enough, and it detracts from the farmstead typology on the rest of the scheme.**

The Applicant asked the Panel to confirm if they thought one building would be better?

**19. The Panel confirmed. They noted that if looking at the traditional orientation of the building, the gable would be on the front because it would have been the narrowest part of the building.**

The Panel noted that, as far as the landscape is concerned, it is the same amount of building except there is a gap in between. If the applicant decides to go with the two buildings, they need to make sure of the orientation works for both wider landscape issues and development character, it will be critical to a successful scheme.

The Applicant stated that the South-East view is very sensitive to change.

**20. The proportions for this property look too much like a house, instead of a long-extended barn form. The Panel understands that they are trying to protect views from a distance sector of land which is very visible. Therefore, it needs a simple form.**

The Applicant agrees.

**21. The Panel advised looking at more characteristic proportions for this building.**

**22. The Panel said this new scheme is a huge improvement from the previous scheme. The previous scheme had a look of space to the front of properties, which were not truly defined. The Panel can see that the applicant is in the process of resolving the car parking issue in the courtyard. The bank of cars on the right and left of the entrance could be thought about more as it is blocking the green finger coming in. Regarding the materiality of it, if they use gravel, they could use plastic inserts to demarcate the car parks, so it does not look like a car park, but people know where to park. It would not always be full of cars so there would be a transition. If space is strong**

enough the car becomes much less of an issue. The previous scheme had a looseness to it and wasn't helpful, in the sense of landscape and relation to the neighbours. This feels more of a convivial space and the landscape behind the scheme, the back garden is relatively unchanged, which is explained by badger set.

**23. The Panel asked what the applicant is working towards in terms of minimum and maximum parking standards?**

The applicant answered that it would be two spaces per dwellings with three visitors' spaces for the all site. This is the standard.

**24. The Panel said that the farmstead typology allows them to have more parking on ad hoc basis, without it necessarily being on the street. It also allows double park, as and when it is required.**

**25. The panel advised the applicant to design in or out the way people would walk through this space. If it is physically possible, the chances are it will happen, if it is not meant to happen, the applicant needs to plan for this.**

The applicant explained there would be limited movement across the site.

**26. The Panel asked about the beech hedge, knowing that the policy says to remove it after a 'period of time' - how it will it be managed? And how will it work in private ownership (maintenance)?**

The applicant stated that they are working up a suitable landscape management plan.

**27. The panel said it was interesting to note that, in the distant view, the beech hedge is a line in the landscape and the buildings sit above it anyway. Even more so in the winter.**

**28. The Panel asked about housing mix and sizes...**

The applicant answered it would consist of a mix of two- and three-bedroom properties. But there is an option to have four-bedroom property, as it is now a private scheme. All properties will exceed minimal space standards.

**29. The Panel asked about the proposed public footway, moving south from the new development.**

	<p>The applicant thinks it is needed and is a benefit to residents. They are happy to provide it.</p> <p><b>30. The Panel feels it is slightly too suburban. The country lane is very quiet and works very well.</b></p> <p>The applicant explained they had tried to replicate the feel of walking along a rural road.</p> <p><b>31. The Panel feels there is no need to formalise it with a path. There could be a more direct approach to the development. ...If not, the route should be an informal type of footway.</b></p> <p><b>32. The Applicant asked the Panel for their thoughts regarding the wall along the boundary to the main entrance?</b></p> <p><b>33. The Panel asked if there was a local precedent in terms of farmyard boundary walls? And asked if they were flint?</b></p> <p>The Applicant stated they had looked at local boundary treatments.</p> <p><b>34. The Panel suggested that integrating the walls to the dwelling could work. We like the idea of varying heights. It helps to move away from a 'gated environment'. The field wall typology language allows a combination of buildings sitting on top of walls which could be nice.</b></p>
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